

The Outlaw's Physician

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Summary: (Takes place in the anime universe. My first crack at this fandom.) Despite the Doctor's promises, he and Martha end up on a harsh desert planet full of bandits and gunslingers. Vash the Stampede shows up, and all hell breaks loose when hostile aliens begin terrorizing the town of February. Martha just wanted a relaxing day on the beach...

The Outlaw's Physician

****A/N:** I started this...oh gosh...several months ago, but I just found it hidden in my files and I decided to follow through with it. The chapters are a little longer, so it'll probably take a while to update, but writing this thing so far has been so freaking fun!

****I hope you enjoy reading it as much as I enjoyed writing it. As always, constructive criticism and reviews are always appreciated!****

Vash screamed and ran, his boots pounding against the bedrock and churning up clouds of dust - the only kind of cloud this planet was used to. Countless bullets whizzed past him, tearing the edges of his red duster coat, but managing to avoid his skin, colliding with the wooden walls of surrounding buildings instead. The gunslinger was extremely lucky when it came to bullet blizzards - some said he had the luck of the Devil himself.

Except...he wasn't so lucky when it came to avoiding trouble. Trouble must have a major crush on him, because it followed him around everywhere. With a sixty billion double dollar bounty on his head, bounty hunters and regular townspeople alike often caught him in their sights and pursued him. Amazing how a ton of money could drive people to kill someone. Did money justify ending a life?

Under the long coat, and the gloves, and the leg-length boots, his

body was horribly scarred. Because, despite the fact that the world was trying to kill him, he refused to take anyone's life. Vash the Stampede, the Humanoid Typhoon, was, in fact, a pacifist.

Sure, he carried around a gun, and was the fastest and greatest aim on the planet, but it was mostly for self defense. And that incredible aim was to incapacitate enemies - not to kill them.

But right now...he was out of ammo.

A rifle bullet narrowly missed his stuck-up blonde hair, and a handgun bullet barely pinged off of his earring. These were getting way too close.

As the chase carried on, the windows ahead of them began opening, and civilians began poking their heads out to see what the commotion was. But they were quickly shoved back inside by Vash, even though it hindered his speed. He couldn't let them get caught up in the chaos.

Now, the strangest thing about Vash, was that he had a two-sided personality. On the outside, he looked like a screaming lunatic frantically dodging bullets and raging through the streets of February. On the inside, his more professional mind was desperately trying to calculate a way out of this whole mess.

There was the humorous, joking, compassionate, happy-go-lucky Vash, who was also apparently a scaredy-cat and a whimp. And there was the serious, haunted, scarred, expert gunslinger Vash - but that was the side he rarely showed.

Behind him, he heard the crowd of townspeople of all shapes, sizes, and ages, storming after him, firing off bullet after bullet. The sounds of their feet colliding against the sandy ground sounded almost like a herd of thomases running from a worm.

The great thing was, he hadn't gotten hurt yet. But the bad thing was...he had no plan. He never usually had a plan - things just kind of...happened. He liked to let it happen. And he sure hoped something happened soon.

Vash winced and cried out, slightly faltering when a bullet finally bit him, slicing through the side of his arm, ripping the cloth and the skin, before passing through and lodging itself into a wall. He heard a cry of triumph behind him from some lucky man who had finally placed a good shot. And still they came, chasing him down like he was a predator's next meal.

Vash shoved his empty silver handgun back into its holster, then wrapped his fingers around his wound, feeling the blood slipping into the holes in his glove. He rounded a corner, trying to get out of the crowd's range for a moment. But he was met by a face-full of wall, not counting on a dead end.

Feeling a sudden blast of cold panic, he gasped and gave a last ditch effort, trying to scramble up the wall. It was no good - there was nothing to grab onto, and the rioting crowd behind him was too close.

There were two things he could do...sit down and accept his fate,

or...he had another gun. But he would have to shoot to kill.

No, never! That was _never_ going to happen! That would make _her_ _sadâ€¦|

"We'll make you pay for what you've done!" Vash heard some man shout. He turned around, facing the dozens of townsfolk who had already swarmed the entrance of the alley. All the men, boys, and even some women stood there at arms, keeping the Stampede in their sights.

"Hey there, fellas! Can't we talk this out?" Vash asked cheekily, shining off a big, nervous grin. He made it his plan to raise his hands up, but immediately cringed and recoiled, feeling more blood dripping down his sleeve.

"It would...It would make us all really happy if you diedâ€¦|" Said a tired, long-haired woman, who didn't look too comfortable with the rifle in her hands. "We could really use that sixty billion double dollar bounty to do a lot of repairs in the townâ€¦|"

"Not to mention, a lot of people suffered because of you," the same man as before spoke up, holding a revolver and aiming between Vash's eyes. But his hands were shaking, and his eyes glared with doubt. Come to think of it...everyone in the crowd looked very hesitant.

"Then what are you waiting for?" Vash asked, his voice growing stern. With his good arm, he reached into his breast pocket and pulled out a pair of orange sunglasses, resting the zig-zazzing temples onto his ears.

Everyone hesitated, looking at each other in doubt. He could tell by their shocked faces that they hadn't actually planned on getting this far. No...they secretly hadn't _wanted_ to get this far. Taking a life wasn't as easy as some said. But at the same time, these people were pretty desperate.

"You won't kill me. You can't," Vash bluffed, pushing the bridge of his sunglasses further up his nose. He hoped it was a good bluffâ€¦|

"N-No...we have to. We have to finish this!" A young man in his twenties shoved his way to the front, shouldering through the crowd to come face to face with the famous outlaw. Tears were freely streaming down his tanned cheeks, and his dark hair curled over his face in an unruly manner. "You have to suffer. You have to! I'll never live in peace if you don't!" Another man in the crowd stepped forward, lowering his rifle and putting a hand on the young man's shoulder.

"Do it, Morgan!" A woman shouted fiercely from somewhere in the crowd. The young man - who was apparently called Morgan - nodded in response, raising his revolver and steadying it with his other hand. Vash found himself staring into the barrel of the gun, gazing into the dark pit that a bullet of hot lead would come rocketing out of.

"This is for my parents..." Morgan snarled, his ferocity contrasting his tears. "And all of the others who died in July, twenty years ago!"

This is to honor all of the people who were slaughtered in the massacre!"

Vash felt his brilliant blue eyes widening behind the orange lenses. He clenched his teeth and balled his hands into fists, preparing for the coming pain. Or perhaps the coming end.

Maybe he deserved this...but he couldn't remember.

Morgan pulled the trigger and a flash erupted from the barrel of the revolver. The bullet jumped out, ready to strike its prey.

And then the strangest thing happened...

A strong wind came from nowhere, blowing up the sand and dust in plumes. It kicked the bullet out of its stream, and the lead collided with the wall, only a hair from Vash's head.

A groaning, wheezing noise filled the air, like no noise they had ever heard before. It sounded almost like rusty or failing engines. And then they saw it - a box of blue burst into existence, fading to and from view repeatedly, before finally becoming solid and sitting still on the bedrock. The dust settled quickly, and all of the sudden, a strange object had popped into the world.

"Witchcraft!" A woman screamed.

"It's Vash the Stampede! He's using some sort of black magic!" A man accused.

"Something bad's gonna happen...just like July! We've gotta get out of here!" Morgan proclaimed, backing up into the crowd. In unison, they all turned tail and fled, screaming or waving their arms in panic.

OoOoOoO

"So...what's outside this time?" Martha asked, leaning against the railing by the door and pushing a dark tuft of hair out of her face. She was a short woman, in her late twenties and black-skinned. Her body spoke of style, but her eyes shined with intelligence. And right now...they also screamed out dry humor. "Another hostile tribe? More racist townsfolk? The slums of humanity's future Earth again?"

The Doctor poked his head around the glass column in the center of the circular console. He was a tall, skinny man clad in a smart pinstripe blazer, and his hair was stuck up in a crazy manner. He had his thick-rimmed "brainy-specs" on, and was grinning rather sheepishly. It was the grin he wore when he knew he had upset his companion.

"I know I haven't exactly shown you the good sights yet...but _that_, _Martha Jones..._that_ is about to change! I've taken you to the Hanging Gardens of Babylon!

He tore around the console, leaping through the large, dome-like control room and rocketing down the ramp that led to the door, his converse raging against the metal mesh floor. Martha crossed her arms and stood up straight, following the Doctor as he threw the door open and stepped outside.

Immediately, they were met by the heat of an intense sun. No..._two_intense suns. And they both knew instantly by the sand under their feet, and the stone buildings towering over them, that something was terribly off.

"Oops..." The Doctor gave another grin, rubbing the back of his neck and looking at Martha nervously. She just gave a long-suffering sigh and shrugged.

"When will you ever get it right?"

"It's not exactly easy to drive!" The Doctor countered clumsily. "Why don't you try - AH!" He was cut off and startled when he suddenly felt arms wrapping around his waist, and he was lifted into the air by surprising strength. Martha jumped back and gasped in surprise, bracing herself for something bad.

"THANK GOODNESS!" A young man's voice squealed in relief and delight. "I almost died! I thought I was gonna bite the dust!"

Martha was pleasantly surprised to see that it wasn't a danger that had taken hold of the Doctor. It was a tall, young man who looked to be in his early twenties, clad in a long red duster coat, swinging the Doctor around in the air like he weighed nothing.

"Put me down!" The Doctor squeaked, more startled than anything.

"I'm eternally grateful for your kindness and mercy! How can I ever make it up to-" and as quickly as it had happened, it stopped. The man suddenly winced and dropped the Doctor, forcing the Timelord to land on his rear end. The stranger cringed and clutched his arm with a groan.

Martha started, noticing the crimson stain on the Doctor's suit where the stranger had grabbed him.

The Doctor noticed it too, and he quickly hopped to his feet.

"Are you alright?"

"Huh?" The stranger asked, snapping his head up and looking startled, as if they had woken him from a dream. Then he spotted their concerned faces and gave them a huge grin, waving his hands in front of him furiously. "I'm fine. Honestly! It was just a scratch! Actually, it's really lucky that a scratch was all I came back with. I really thought I was gonna die!" He gave a dramatic sigh of relief, placing a hand on his chest.

"No, you're hurt," Martha observed sternly, though the compassion glinted in her eyes. She stepped forward and held her hand out for the stranger. "I'm a doctor. Let me help." The Doctor stepped back and watched his companion with admiration.

Martha waited patiently for the stranger to accept her offer, but when he didn't, she looked up at him. She saw him gaping at her, his blue eyes wide, and was that...drool!? She looked back at the Doctor in shock, but he just shrugged at her.

"Check for a concussion?" He suggested cheekily. "Or perhaps a bad case of awe-struck. Love-stricken?"

"Stoppit," she snapped, but she couldn't help but give him a grin.

"Am I on my way to Heaven?" The stranger finally spoke up again, in an awed voice. "Because a dark-skinned angel has come to sweep me off my feet! Oh, wonderful day! My fair lady!" He exclaimed, dropping to his knees and accepting Martha's hand. He gave it a passionate kiss-making her blush furiously - then looked back up at her with big, shining eyes.

Martha looked to the Doctor again for help, but he was just grinning at her, trying to suppress a giggle.

"The process of my introduction is normally shocking to some people, so I think I'll get it out of the way now, to avoid future complications," the stranger continued talking, standing up and stepping closer to Martha, forcing her to take a step back. He held her hand through it all. "My name is Vash. Vash the Stampede. I'm the hunter of peace, and I'm also chasing the elusive mayfly called love. The Humanoid Typhoon with a sixty-billion double dollar bounty on his headâ€|"

Et cetera, Martha thought to herself. She let him ramble on, taking this opportunity to examine the open wound on Vash's upper arm. With her free hand, she parted the torn cloth to get a better look at the bullet hole. He was right in saying that it was a minor injury, and it was already beginning to clot - a good wrap would be just enough to let it heal.

"So what's your name?" Vash was saying excitedly. "I bet it's beautiful!"

"Huh? Oh!" She snapped her attention back to what he was saying. "I'm Martha. Martha Jones."

"Woooooow!" He shined a gappy grin, his eyes practically sparkling in delight. "An unusual name...fit for a queen!"

"Hehe...yeahâ€|" she chuckled nervously, then turned back to the Doctor, giving him a look that said "distract him." He nodded and gave a thumbs up, taking the queue.

"And I'm the Doctor!" He stepped forward, taking Vash's other hand and shaking it vigorously. "We're a bit new to the area, so I was wondering if you could help explain a couple of things for me. Like...where are we?"

"We're in the town of February, just East of LR," he explained with a big smile. Seeing that he was momentarily distracted, Martha slipped her hand out of his and bounded back into the TARDIS. Immediately, she felt a relief from the intense heat outside, stepping into the always-chilling interior of the ship.

She could hear them talking faintly from outside as she grabbed the hook from the toolbag on the console and knelt down. She looped the hook into a hole in the grating, then lifted the panel up, sliding it to the side. She then rummaged through the various boxes and

machinery under the mesh, careful to avoid the wires or other delicate-looking connections. Then, with a heave, she pulled up a simple red box covered in circular writings. She couldn't decipher the characters, but the Doctor had mentioned before that it was a first-aid kit.

Martha popped the metal latches open and lifted the heavy lid, revealing a collection of strange and alien-looking equipment. But in the midst of all of that, she was able to locate a simple roll of gauze, and some tape. She searched further and found a small bottle of what looked like rubbing alcohol...and least, she hoped it was alcohol. She untwisted the top and gave the clear liquid a sniff - the strong smell confirmed her hope.

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"This is gonna be a stupid questionâ€¦" the Doctor was saying, continuing to fulfill Martha's wish, and also inquiring for the sake of his own curiosity. "But I got hit in the head a couple of days ago, and I can't remember. What's the name of the planet we're on?"

"Ohâ€¦" That question seemed to take Vash by surprise. He furrowed his eyebrows and scratched his head in puzzlement, pacing for a few steps. "It's called Gunsmoke, I think. But I suppose you could call it New Earth. Or Earth 2.0."

Now that wasn't right at all...he'd visited New Earth on several occasions, and it was the complete opposite of this planet. New Earth was home to a lush and fertile landscape, and humanity was on the peak of its ingenuity, building skyscrapers of clean metal and newfound materials. This planet resembled a western-styled desert.

"And what...year is this?"

"You must have hit your head pretty hard," he blinked in surprise.

"Yaaaah...I'm a bit...clumsy. Accident prone," the Doctor grinned sheepishly.

"Hey, me too!" Vash grinned in good humor. "And it's Stardate: 130. Last I checked, at least."

Something was definitely out of place...if this really was New Earth, it should be crawling with inhabitants and covered in futuristic technology, as well as plant life. Where was it all?

"Now let me ask you a question, bud," Vash continued, growing slightly more serious and pointing at the TARDIS. "What's a police box? Are you with the police? Did I just confess to you!?"

"Oh, no, no, no, it's not like that! We're...sorta...freelance. Martha and I," the Doctor explained quickly, trying to give off a disarming smile. "You've got nothing to worry about. But...for curiosity's sake...why would we turn you in?"

"You mean...you really don't know?" Vash asked, blinking in surprise again. He was honestly astonished - the man in front of him seemed so

open and trustworthy, but altogether clueless as to where he was. Who was this man? "You're not from here, are you?"

The Doctor opened his mouth to answer, but was immediately cut off when Vash suddenly jumped, yelping in pain and alarm. Peering over the whimpering stranger's shoulder, the Timelord saw that Martha had tied an alcohol-soaked strip of gauze over his wound while they had been talking.

"That really hurt!" Vash whined, his lip stuck out in a pout and his eyes glazing in betrayal. He rubbed his arm and whimpered. "That was really cold-heartedâ€|betrayed by a beautiful woman! This just isn't my day!"

"It should heal quickly, as long as you don't do anything strenuous with it," Martha said, an amused smirk on her face.

"Oh, the agony!" Vash was yelling melodramatically, grasping his wound and giving them both a pitiful look. "It hurts so bad, I just can't stand it!" He then slumped against the alley wall, falling to his knees and tucking his chin in his chest. "There's only one thing that could make the torture bearableâ€|"

The Doctor and Martha passed each other a concerned look - neither of them really knew how to feel about this. Was he just a wimp, or a jokester?

Martha eventually took the bait, kneeling down next to him by the wall, trying to get a better look at him, but he had his face buried in his hands. The very first thing she noticed was that he reeked of gunpowder and leather.

"What would help?" She asked him hesitantly. His pitiful response was muffled by his hands, and she leaned in closer, straining to hear. "What was that?"

"I kiss from a lovely lady would really helpâ€|"

Martha stood up in a jolt, taken aback by his request. "Not a chance! You don't half stink!"

"Aw manâ€|" he whined, sitting up quickly and looking up at her with pleading eyes. "I really thought it would work this time! Not even just a peck on the cheek?"

"No!" She shook her head in exasperation - this wasn't the first time she had been hit up on their travels.

"What if I took a shower?" He continued to beg, crawling forwards and wrapping his arms around her legs. She gasped, trying to step out of his grasp, but to no avail. Behind her, the Doctor was laughing uncontrollably, seemingly enjoying every moment of this. She would kill him laterâ€|

Martha was about to consider kicking the man in the head, but that was when everything changed.

Vash stood up abruptly, nearly causing Martha to lose her balance. All his flippancy had gone, to be replaced with a concerned seriousness. His eyebrows were furrowed and his lips were tight; in

the blink of an eye, he had whipped out a large, silver handgun seemingly out of nowhere, and was aiming it towards the entrance of the alley.

The Doctor had stopped laughing, and had also grown concerned, having pulled out his sonic screwdriver, and was currently scanning the area ahead of them. It seemed that Martha was the only one who couldn't tell what was going on. She hated that sometimes.

"Monster!" Someone shouted from nearby, followed by the screams of dozens of men and women.

Vash practically launched himself from where he stood, rocketing out of the alley at an incredible speed. The Doctor followed close behind only moments later, leaving Martha to take the end of the line. Again!|

The Doctor kept running, trying to keep up with the red, bullet-shredded coat-tails that he barely managed to spot sliding around turns and corners. This guy was fast - too fast to be ignored. But that would be a problem to go over later on.

OoOoOoO

Vash eventually broke into a yellow bedrock clearing, marked only by the open space, two wooden benches, and a dried up well in the middle. The clearing was abandoned - for once, all of the townspeople had been smart enough to run away. He hated it when they were stupid and tried to fight back against unnatural beings who were always too strong for them. Picking up a fight seemed to be a bad habit that all of humanity shared.

He spotted the monster quickly, and immediately recoiled, halting in his steps and widening his eyes in horror. The creature before him was so horrible...so fiendish, it made his stomach roil, and the bile threatened to rise in his throat.

What terrible beast was this? Had a grotesque alien been recruited by the Gung-ho Gang? Another monstrosity sent to annihilate him?

The bulbous beast took a step forward, and Vash snapped his handgun up quickly. He was aware that the barrels were empty, but at least the silver gun would appear to be a threat. That is, if the beast was capable of comprehending threats.

"Stay back! Stay where you are!" Vash shouted threateningly, trying to keep the monster at bay until he could figure out just how much of a threat it really was. However, the beast either ignored him, or couldn't hear what he said. It took another step forward, then raised its disproportionate head and parted its fat lips. And slowly, very slowly, it let out a spine-shaking, nerve-racking bellow of horror.

"_Moooooooooooo!_"

Vash gasped and shuddered, taking a step back with a cringe. What was this terrible creature!?

"Were you sent here to kill me?" He asked, trying to keep his steady composure. "Are you the next Gung-Ho Gun?"

"I doubt that!" The Doctor exclaimed, skidding to a halt behind him and watching the beast with a grin. "That's a cow. Adorable, isn't it?"

"A...cu?" He gawked, lowering his handgun by a fraction.

"_Cow_," the Doctor corrected him. "Now will you put the gun away? I hate those things."

Very hesitantly, Vash slowly lowered his handgun and slipped it back into the holster hooked to his belt. He stepped back to join the Doctor, never taking his eyes off of the languid cow.

"It's not dangerous?" He then asked warily.

"Have you never seen a cow before?" The Doctor asked, rounding on the other man in concerned curiosity. "Or did they not bring cows over from Earth?"

And if that was the case...why was there one here now?

"Wait!" Vash gasped, an astonished look crossing his face. He took his eyes off of the cow and turned to face the Doctor, smiling in his excitement. "You mean to tell me that this cow thing it from _Earth_?! Really?!"

"That's right," the Doctor grinned, both surprised and delighted by his enthusiasm. "It was common livestock."

Martha finally caught up to them, gasping and skidding to a stop behind them. Breathlessly, she looked at the clearing, then the two men in front of her, confusion causing her eyebrows to furrow.

"What is it?"

"Oh, Martha! Glad to see you could join us," the Doctor mocked in good humor. Martha sighed in response, but didn't say anything.

"My angel!" Vash proclaimed, dashing to her side and laying his arm over her shoulders. She tried shrugging him off, but he was very passively persistent. "No need to fear! We've handled the crisis!"

"What crisis?" she asked in exasperation, giving the Doctor a long-suffering look.

"It was a cow," he shrugged in response. "See? Right overâ€|.oh."

The cow was gone.

"Wow!" Vash cried out. "Those cow-y livestock things are fast!"

"That's differentâ€|" the Doctor observed. "It couldn't have walked away that fast." He whipped out his sonic screwdriver, extending the tip and filling the clearing with its futuristic whine. He walked closer to the center of the clearing, giving it a quick scan, then snatching a scan in Martha and Vash's direction. "There's a lot of

energy residue in this spot. Some sort of energy that I've seen before...but I can't place it."

"Not to point out the obvious, Mister," Vash was saying, a quizzical look on his face. "But you two are really weird...strange accents, magical blue box, her really dark skin...and is that lost technology you're using?"

"Oi!" He sniffed defiantly, pushing the tip of the screwdriver down again and slipping the device into his breast pocket. "I could say the same thing about you! Your body is _caked _with energy that I've never seen before. I grabbed a scan back in the alley, and just now. Something's not right about you."

He was very taken aback by the Timelord's observations; leave it to the Doctor to offend someone they had just met - he was very good at that. Vash slid his arm off of Martha's shoulders and took a step forward, advancing on the Doctor. They couldn't tell whether he was offended, enraged, or simply baffled.

For a fraction of a moment, he looked very serious, and very disturbed. But he quickly threw it off, reclaiming his flippant and boisterous nature, and giving them a huge smile.

"Sorry, Doc! I've got no clue what you're talking about!"

"I suppose it doesn't matter," the Doctor shrugged it off, but his concerned look showed that he was still pondering it. "Anyways...if cows aren't supposed to be on this planet, then what was that one doing here?"

"Beats me," Vash shrugged, then snapped his eyes open in realization and pointed an accusing finger at the Doctor. "How come you know so much about Earth, anyways?"

"Oh! I'm a...a bit of aâ€¦" he scrambled, rubbing the back of his neck furiously and giving a sheepish grin.

"We're scholars," Martha quickly interjected. "We travel far and wide on a search for information. Any information, really."

"A noble quest!" Vash squeaked in admiration, gaping at her and causing her to sigh again.

"Never mind that," the Doctor cut in, but not without first shooting Martha a grateful look. "We've gotta figure this cow out - something just isn't right. There's a trail of residual energy that we can follow. It seems like a first good step."

"Right," Martha agreed, happy to be getting on the move again. Sometimes relaxing days were just fine...but it was easy to tell that both of them craved an adventure on this trip.

"Wait, you two are going?" Vash asked, disappointed. "But we've only just met. And between you and meâ€¦" he stepped closer to the Timelord, whispering quietly in his ear: "I haven't won the lady's heart, yet."

The Doctor took a step away from him and gave him a patient grin. "That's right; we're leaving. You can go back to doing whatever it is

you were up to before we got here."

"Or I could...come with you?" He suggested, scooting closer and giving them both the pitiful-puppy look, clasping his hands together and making his lip quiver in a pout.

The Doctor and Martha passed each other a look, searching for each other's approval. After several moments of deliberation, they looked back up at the near-stranger, both with a sigh.

"Something's off about you, and I'll have to keep you with me to figure out what it is," the Doctor resigned.

"And it would be a good idea for me to keep an eye on that wound," Martha shrugged.

"_YES!_" Vash squealed, gathering Martha in his arms in an enormous bear hug, much to her dismay. She tried to squirm out of it for several moments to no avail. Then, as a last resort, she reached up and prodded his wound with her fingers, causing him to yelp and let go, jumping backwards and clutching his arm.

"You'll have to train that new pet porcupine of yours!" The Doctor giggled.

"Oh, don't startâ€¦" she sighed.

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file.